

In the Claims:

1. (previously amended). A therapeutic composition, comprising isolated dermal sheath tissue and/or a cell derived therefrom comprising at least one selected gene, or functional fragment thereof, and wherein said at least one selected gene, or functional fragment thereof is delivered to a target site when said dermal sheath tissue is part of a gene therapy vehicle.
2. (previously amended). A gene therapy vehicle for delivering at least one selected gene, or functional fragment thereof, to a target site wherein said gene therapy vehicle comprises isolated dermal sheath tissue and/or a cell derived therefrom.
3. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 1, wherein said dermal sheath tissue or cell is derived from the lower portion of a hair follicle.
4. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 3, wherein said dermal sheath tissue or cell is derived from a lower third of said hair follicle.
5. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 3, wherein said dermal sheath tissue or said cell is derived from a segment or ring of a combination of follicle/tissue cells.
6. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 2, which is engineered by recombinant techniques so as to include at least one insertion site into which at least one selected gene is be placed.
7. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 6, wherein said selected gene is inserted into said gene therapy vehicle so that the expression of said selected gene results in the provision of the corresponding protein product.
8. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 7, wherein said vehicle is provided with multiple insertion sites to carry multiple genes and wherein when said

genes are expressed said gene therapy vehicle provides for the delivery of multiple proteins.

9-10. (cancelled).

11. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 2, wherein said selected gene for insertion is inserted in frame with the genome of the gene therapy vehicle so as to provide for correct expression of said selected gene.

12. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 2, further comprising a promoter wherein said selected gene is under the transcriptional control of said promoter.

13. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 12, wherein said promoter is an inducible promoter.

14. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 12, wherein said promoter is a constitutive promoter.

15. (previously amended). A vector comprising the gene therapy vehicle of claim 2 wherein said vector further comprises

(i) at least one insertion site for at least one selected gene, or functional fragment thereof, and

(ii) other expression control elements for ensuring that once the vector infects or penetrates said tissue and/or cells of said gene therapy vehicle, expression of said selected gene can take place.

16. (previously amended). A therapeutic composition comprising a carrier and the gene therapy vehicle of claim 2.

17. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said composition has anti-bacterial properties.

18. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said composition has anti-septic properties.
19. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said composition further comprises growth promoting additives.
20. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said composition further comprises at least one anaesthetic.
21. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, for topical application wherein said therapeutic composition is provided in a suitable carrier solution, gel, cream, or emollient.
22. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said therapeutic composition comprises a carrier solution as said carrier.
23. (previously amended). A therapeutic appliance comprising the therapeutic composition of claim 16, wherein said carrier is incorporated therein, and/or attached thereto, a plaster or bandage.
24. (previously amended). A gene therapy vehicle for use in delivering a selected gene, or functional fragment thereof, to a given site wherein said gene therapy vehicle comprises dermal sheath tissue and/or a cell derived therefrom, which tissue and/or cells comprise heterologous genetic material and which, in vivo, said dermal sheath tissue and/or cell differentiate to provide at least one differentiated tissue type.
25. (previously amended). The gene therapy vehicle of claim 24, which acts as a wound healing system.

26. (previously amended). A wound healing system comprising a matrix material having incorporated therein, and/or attached thereto, the gene therapy vehicle of claim 24.

27. (previously amended). A wound healing system according to Claim 26 wherein said matrix material comprises native collagen.

28. (previously amended). The wound healing system of claim 26, wherein said matrix material comprises collagenous gels or lattices constructed from reconstituted collagen.

29. (previously amended). The wound healing system of claim 28, wherein said matrix material comprises components from an extra cellular matrix.

30. (previously amended). A wound healing system according to Claim 29 comprising a surgical dressing.

31. (previously amended). The wound healing system of claim 30, for treatment of acute, and/or chronic, and/or minor, and/or severe, wound healing.

32. (previously amended). A wound healing system according to Claim 31 for use in the treatment of cartilage repair, and/or bone repair, and/or muscle repair, and/or connective tissue repair, and/or blood vessel repair.

33. (previously amended). A wound healing system according to Claim 32 wherein said system comprises a plurality of cell types from a hair follicle.

34. (previously amended). The wound healing system of claim 33, wherein one of said cell types, in addition to said dermal sheath tissue, and/or said cell derived therefrom, comprises dermal papilla tissue.

35. (previously amended). A therapeutic composition according to Claim 16 wherein said composition comprises a plurality of cell types from a hair follicle.

36. (previously amended). The therapeutic composition of claim 34, wherein one of said cell types, in addition to said dermal sheath tissue, and/or said cell derived therefrom, comprises dermal papilla tissue.